

Monvillea (Britton and Rose, 1920)

Leo A. Martin

Britton and Rose named this genus after Parisian cactus dealer Monville, who had earlier named several species as members of genus *Cereus*. They are from central South America, from southern Brazil into Venezuela. Clambering, vining cacti, they possess relatively small but very effective spines. Found growing through trees and shrubs, shaded by the leaves, in Phoenix they do well in dappled to full shade, though tolerating full sun if moved gradually. They tolerate little or no frost, appreciate warmth in winter, and will grow all winter if kept warm, watered, and brightly lit. In the summer they grow fastest with plenty of water. Flowers in abundance are white to pinkish, nocturnal, and long-tubed, reminiscent of *Peniocereus*, but held laterally rather than upright. Fruits are red, and *M. spegazzini*, at least, is self-fertile in my collection.

Familiar species include *M. spegazzini*, with marbled grey and purple stems, and its crested form; and *M. cavendishii*, with solid green stems, somewhat larger in scale than *M. spegazzini*.